

## **ST ALBANS DIOCESAN SYNOD**

**13 OCTOBER 2018**

The following question was received out of time but the President has agreed that it should be circulated with the answer for information.

"The churches and the people of the Deanery of Bedford continue to be engaged in a number of initiatives as part of our Deanery MAP to 'Reach new people' which demonstrates clear discipleship, and a commitment to growth. However, it would appear, that when applications are made for fresh expressions grants from the RNP budget, then support is only given to parishes who are able to pay their Parish Share in full.

If this is the case, is it not counterproductive to restrict support only those who are able to pay Parish Share in full, rather than to equip those parishes who are genuinely searching for new ways of creating new disciples, yet lack the financial resources to do so and therefore seeking much needed support. This seems to be inconsistent with an ecclesiology and missiology which encompasses all."

The Director of Mission responds:

"Each application for a fresh expression of church grant is assessed on its own merits. This assessment includes two key factors. Firstly whether the proposed project effectively identifies how new disciples of Christ will be made, and secondly, the financial circumstances of the parish/benefice.

There is no criterion that specifically states that grants are only awarded to parishes that are able to pay their Parish Share in full. However, the grants are given for future growth through fresh expressions of church that have the potential to be sustainable beyond the funding period. It is necessary therefore to factor in the current financial situation or issues of the parish or benefice making the application. So far twelve grants have been awarded totalling £137,173."